

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 13571 191651Z  
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W  
-----103211 191653Z /50

O R 191633Z AUG 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0772  
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T BONN 13571

NODIS

EYES ONLY FOR THE SECRETARY FROM THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3  
TAGS: PARM, ST, GW  
SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR TEST SITE

REFS: (A) STATE 195279; (B) LAGOS 9337;  
(C) BONN 13059; (D) STATE 197323

1. ON AUGUST 18, I CONVEYED INFORMATION IN REF A TO  
FONOFF STATE SECRETARY VAN WELL. AT THE SAME TIME, I  
MENTIONED THE REPORT IN REF B THAT LAGOS ANTI-APARTHEID  
CONFERENCE IS LIKELY TO PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THE  
SAG'S NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT AND TO THE HELP IT IS  
ALLEGEDLY RECEIVING FROM "CERTAIN STATES."

2. VAN WELL SAID SOUTH AFRICAN AUTHORITIES HAD TOLD  
THE FRG THAT (A) THE SAG NUCLEAR PROGRAM WAS DEVOTED  
SOLELY TO PEACEFUL PURPOSES; (B) NO NUCLEAR TEST WAS  
IMMINENT ("BEVORSTEHEND"); AND (C) SOUTH AFRICA HAD  
NO COOPERATION ON NUCLEAR MATTERS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.  
VAN WELL SAID HE HAD PASSED THIS INFORMATION TO  
SOVIET AMBASSADOR (FALIN) IN RESPONSE TO EARLIER SOVIET  
SECRET

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DEMARCHE TO FRG EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER SAG  
NUCLEAR PROGRAM (REF C). VAN WELL HAD TOLD FALIN THAT  
FRG WOULD ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION THROUGH  
CONTACTS WITH FRIENDLY GOVERNMENTS.

3. VAN WELL SAID THE FRG WAS CONSIDERING MAKING A MORE  
FORMAL REPLY TO THE SOVIET DEMARCHE. HE ALSO MENTIONED

THAT THE FRG HAD RECEIVED AN "ORAL MESSAGE" FROM BREZHNEV TO SCHMIDT ON THE SAME SUBJECT. VAN WELL SAID THAT, IN ITS REPLY TO FALIN'S DEMARCHE, THE FRG MIGHT ADDRESS A COMMENT IN THE BREZHNEV MESSAGE THAT "WE KNOW SOUTH AFRICA COULD NOT DO IT (I.E., CARRY OUT NUCLEAR PROGRAM) ALONE." VAN WELL NOTED THAT TASS HAD BEEN MORE DIRECT IN IMPLYING THAT WESTERN STATES, INCLUDING THE FRG, WERE HELPING SOUTH AFRICA WITH ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM. VAN WELL'S ASSOCIATE (HAUBER) INQUIRED IF U.S. HAD ALSO RECEIVED BREZHNEV MESSAGE AND HOW WE PLANNED TO HANDLE IT; I SAID I WAS UN-INFORMED.

4. VAN WELL SAID THE FRG CURRENTLY HAS NO NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH SOUTH AFRICA. HE SAID HE WOULD DOUBLE-CHECK THIS, BUT SEEMED QUITE SURE OF HIS ASSERTION.

5. VAN WELL NOTED THAT THE FRG BUYS URANIUM FROM SOUTH AFRICA, BUT TERMED THIS A PURELY COMMERCIAL MATTER. HE RECALLED THAT IN EARLY TO MID-1970'S, THE GERMAN PRIVATE FIRM "STEAG" HAD COOPERATED WITH THE SOUTH AFRICANS IN URANIUM ENRICHMENT RESEARCH. THIS HAD STOPPED, HE SAID, BECAUSE THE SOUTH AFRICANS LOST INTEREST AFTER DEVELOPING THEIR OWN URANIUM ENRICHMENT PROCESS WHICH THEY CONSIDERED BETTER THAN THE GERMAN ONE.

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6. IN RESPONSE TO MY EMPHASIS ON DESIRABILITY OF CLEARLY DISASSOCIATING SUPPLIER NATIONS FROM SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM, VAN WELL SAID FRG NON-COOPERATION HAD BEEN CLEARLY SPELLED OUT AT LAST UNGA. CURRENTLY, FRG HAS BEEN EXPLAINING THIS POSITION DIRECTLY TO AFRICAN REPRESENTATIVES IN BONN. MINISTER OF STATE VON DOHNANYI, WHO WILL BE FRG REPRESENTATIVE AT LAGOS CONFERENCE, WILL BE FULLY BRIEFED AND WILL BE PREPARED TO REBUT CLEARLY ANY ALLEGATIONS RE ALLEGED FRG ASSISTANCE TO SOUTH AFRICAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM.

7. AFTER MEETING WITH VAN WELL, HAUBER MENTIONED THAT, ACCORDING TO FRG INTELLIGENCE, SOUTH AFRICA WILL NOT BE IN A POSITION TO CARRY OUT A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION FOR "AT LEAST ONE OR TWO YEARS."

8. I HAVE ANOTHER APPOINTMENT WITH VAN WELL AT 1630 TODAY TO DISCUSS WITH HIM QUESTIONS RAISED BY REF D. STOESEL

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** NUCLEAR TEST SITES, CAT-C, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, NUCLEAR COOPERATION PROGRAMS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
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**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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